final measure; but that the whole subject was to undergo discussion and revision, and the present bills superseded, as soon as could be, by one comprehensive and more simple measure.

With this understanding, and with the several alterations suggested incorporated, the deputation stated their desire that the amendments should pass into law.

The report of the Builders' Society summed up as follows:—

"The *general objects* of this additional bill appear to be to increase the authority of the official referees, permitting them, according to their discretion, to set aside the Act altogether, extending their powers, giving them summary and final jurisdiction, and conferring legal and unimpeachable value on their awards; removing from them the trouble and responsibility of special supervision, and bringing under the authority of the Acts such portions of great public works (railroads, docks, &c.), previously exempted, as abut upon public ways, and empowering the recovery of all fees, &c. by the most summary process.

An attempt is made by clause 7 to give to the district surveyors an authority which would be in the highest degree objectionable, by imposing on them the duty of examining into "the general stability and efficiency" of all structures; a power of interference in all respects to be deprecated by the public, while on the district surveyors themselves it would devolve an amount of responsibility by no means enviable.

It is to be regretted that the same disposition to minute legislation still continues, and that this bill is too much in conformity with the former Act, through which there runs so much of the spirit of an individual specification, in place of the broader views and more general directions that should distinguish an act of the legislature.

While to us as builders this minuteness of detail is comparatively unimportant, to our employers the public, it is a source of annoyance, impediment, and expense—at the same time that it is productive of no real public good.

An efficient security against the transmission of fire from building to building, and the protection of the public against accident by insufficient structures adjoining public ways, are all that the public weal requires, for against all other mischief the private interest of the owner is a sufficient guard. The more enlightened views of the present day have opened a fresh field in the sanitary provisions for the first time incorporated in the Act 7th & 8th Vict., cap. 84, and for these purposes it doubtless is well that the legislature should interfere; but a more striking proof of the manner in which legislation has been overdone can hardly be found, than in the fact that the Act 7th & 8th Vict. cap. 84, upon which the then First Commissioner of Woods and Forests, the indefatigable and intelligent Lord Lincoln, expended so much time and saw so many deputations, which itself consisted of no less than one hundred and twenty clauses, with schedules that almost exhausted the alphabet, and twenty different forms of notices, having been once amended by an Act containing eight clauses, now requires a further Act, with twenty-eight additional clauses, ten alterations to schedules, one set of new rules, and eight new forms of notices, making an aggregate of 119 folio pages, with which every one interested in buildings must become familiar, on pain of incurring the penalties against which the ordinary authorities of the law of the land will be no safeguard, and afford no appeal.

THOMAS PIPER, Hon. Sec."

To that portion of schedule A in the new bill, which provides that,—"If a building be situate within 16 feet of another building, not in the same occupation, the external wall of which last-mentioned building shall have any openings on the side towards the first-mentioned building, then no opening may be made in the opposite wall of the first-mentioned building,"—and to the other following clauses touching the same matter,—both builders and district surveyors strongly object. If passed as it now stands, it will be a most unjust and unnecessary interference with private rights.

For our own parts we sincerely hope that the bill will not get through Parliament before the session closes; all agree with us in our objection to multiplying the enactments relating to buildings, and the uncertainty and difficulty which must result from such a course. To pass it this session in order to repeal it next, as is proposed, will but uselessly encumber the statute books, and will give much more trouble to all engaged in building within its control, than can be compensated for by the means of ameliorating some present hardships which it affords.

## AN ACCOUNT OF THE PALACE OF CHAMBORD, FRANCE.

CROSSING the Loire, you pass along a sandy road through a district of vineyards, till you enter a forest, in the midst of which, and at about four leagues from Blois, lies the celebrated *Château de Chambord*.

It is difficult to describe the effect it first creates upon the mind—it looks so perfectly unlike any thing one has ever seen before. Below—its massive round towers and perfect simplicity give the idea of the strong fortress of ancient date. Above—the wildest confusion and profusion of the most fantastic, the most beautiful, and the ugliest forms, all mingle together and produce an architectural scene that cannot be imagined.

The building is immense, and has an appearance of extreme grandeur, stateliness, and solidity.

Androuet Ducerceau says, "All this edifice is admirable, by reason of its great massiveness, and presents an effect wondrously superb on account of the immensity of work in it."

It is said to have been begun to be built by Francis I. after his return from Spain, about the year 1526, and that nearly 2,000 workmen were employed on it for many years.

The centre building is in the form of a square, having at the angles four great round towers about 60 feet in diameter. This centre square building is inclosed, as it were, within an exterior court, having at its angles round towers also. Of these, the two in a line with the principal building nearly resemble those of the centre, with which they are connected by a continuation of the front; and the two towers at the other extremities are smaller, and connected with an insignificant range of buildings for stables, offices, &c., and which, though built by Mansard, in the time of Gaston d'Orleans, are a complete eye-sore contrasted with the more ancient building.

I believe it is unknown who was the architect of Chambord. Primaticcio has been mentioned, and it seems to me likely to have been designed by an artist accustomed to flights of the imagination, rather than by an architect who would have studied greater appropriateness in the forms.

Though it is not so stated in any account that I am aware of, I cannot help fancying that the round towers must be the remains of some older building, so completely does the plan resemble the inclosed strong-hold, the old *maison-forte* of the earlier middle ages.

Three ranges of pilasters at almost regular intervals, girt the exterior of the principal building, which is partly relieved with open galleries; above these is an entablature, shewing the same kind of machicolation and shell-work as in the building of Francis, at Blois; and above the cornice is a balustrade, which girts the platform on the roof. Towards the interior of the court, the architecture possesses more variety, and at the two angles is an open staircase of beautiful design, resembling the one at Blois.

But the roof is the glory of Chambord. The whole top of the building is one grand terrace, paved like a marble court.

Immense pointed roofs, more than 50 feet high, rise above the towers like ornamented pyramids studded with magnificent dormers and gabels, intermingled with elegant chimney shafts and towers, decorated with niches and flanked with columns in most beautiful proportion.

Elevated above all the rest is the grand centre staircase of the building (of the interior of which I will speak presently). This, as it rises above the platform, is surrounded by columns supporting a gallery, from which spring eight grand flying buttresses, ornamented with gigantic salamanders and supporting the cupola, which terminates in the remains of the famous *fleur-de-lis*, which gave the name to this crowning glory the "*Tour de la Fleur-de-Lis*."

There are published views to explain, in some degree, the appearance of this wonderful work; but no drawing can convey the full effect of this labyrinth of palaces, seen at different points of view, as you wander about this magnificent platform.

The various towers and chimney-shafts are of most elegant proportion; but the details, though of beautiful design, are rarely executed with the finish of the work at Blois, which they much resemble.

The caps of the pilasters, and the corbels at their base, are of infinite variety.

On the gable and the buttress of centre tower may be remarked dark lozenges and circles, and also a sort of fluting. To these I beg to call your attention; for though looking from below like inlaid marble, they are in fact nothing but pieces of slate nailed on the surface.

The interior arrangement of the château is extremely peculiar. On each floor one vast apartment stretches in the form of a cross, from back to front, and from side to side, of the building; and in the centre of the cross is the celebrated double staircase, rising through every floor, and forming the highest object in the roof above.

In each of the four angles left by the cross is a separate suite of apartments, including also others within the angle towers, and from two of these, again, there is a communication by another suite of rooms with the two outer towers on the same front. The large cross-shaped chambers are called *Salles des Gardes*; but I cannot think that rooms of such magnitude, communicating with every quarter of the château, could ever all of them have been intended as guard chambers. I rather imagine, considering that Chambord was erected by Francis I. as a hunting palace, that it was arranged on this singular plan as a place where state was to be laid aside, and that these halls were places of general rendezvous. Their ceilings are vaulted and divided into panellings, filled with the initial F and the royal salamander in flames alternately. In one of these curious chambers, where scenes of state and ceremony have often occurred, Moliere's play of the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme" was represented for the first time, before Louis XIV.

The grand staircase is wonderful—wonderful for the effect it produces and the beauty of its proportion and its ornaments, rather than for any peculiar difficulty of construction. Its construction may be thus described:—the outer diameter of the staircase is, I suppose, about 30 feet; in the centre of this is an inner wall, in diameter about 10 feet; between these two circles the stairs wind up in a double spiral, commencing at opposite points, so that parties entering at each, in ascending, see each other repeatedly through openings, but do not meet till they arrive at the various floors. The exterior of the staircase is decorated, and the interior wall is also highly ornamented with a variety of beautiful niches. The salamander in flames and the initial F are also introduced, the latter surrounded with a frame of cords—emblem of the Cordilieres to which the king's mother belonged. Of the termination of this staircase above the roof I have already spoken.

Of the four hundred and forty chambers which this mighty château is said to contain, there is not one that has escaped the distressing evil of whitewash, and few of them retain any ornament indicating their former use or recalling their former grandeur. I sketched a ceiling of a small vaulted room, said to be a private chapel, where the panels resembled those in the *Salles des Gardes*; and I remarked a chamber where there were indications that a painted frieze, three feet deep, had been; but everywhere the walls are bare—not a vestige remains of any kind of hanging or decoration. Destruction, the most ruthless that can be conceived, has swept over the whole interior: all the furniture, the paintings, the wainscoting of the walls, the very doors, the windows, were burnt, broken, or stolen at the time of the Revolution.

Yet, what must the chambers have been at the time of the royal Francis, who so loved to surround himself with objects of art!—what thousands of works produced under his fostering care still remain to us! Who can doubt that the rooms, so wretched now, were one blaze of splendour then? that, besides

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